

water in Upper Lake, but the Bureau of Reclamation does not have the permit, the license, the right to use the water themselves for salmon in the river or for the sucker fish that stay in the lake.

Going further, Section 8 of the Reclamation Act clearly states that the Federal Government cannot interfere with the laws of States relating to the control or distribution of water used in irrigation.

So in 1978, *California vs. the U.S.* certified that a State can impose requirements under distribution of water through a Federal reclamation project as long as they are consistent with clear Congressional directives as Congress set this back up over 100 years ago and ongoing. The Congress has made it clear multiple times that the Klamath Project was designed and established for irrigation.

So if you want to concede just for a moment, playing along with Fish and Wildlife, that the current level at 4,140.4, and you take it down to 4,138, there is 173,000 acre-feet of water available for farmers right now that should not be taken, even if you concede the sucker fish total.

So we have got giant problems in the basin.

MATERNAL MORTALITY CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Madam Speaker, we are in the midst of a shameful healthcare crisis. In 2021, there is no reason that giving birth should be more dangerous for women today than it was for their mothers.

Despite declining rates and maternal mortality around the world, in the United States, the rates have been climbing in recent years. Decades of institutional racism in our society and our healthcare system have brought us to this moment.

Data released by the CDC last month shows that the maternal mortality crisis is only worsening, and the risks are even greater for Black women and other women of color. Black women are three times more likely, and indigenous women are more than twice as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes as non-Hispanic women. Even worse, more than two-thirds of the deaths are preventable.

Additionally, the rates of pregnancy-related complications are on the rise. And for every maternal death in the United States, there are approximately 100 women who experience severe maternal morbidity, or a "near miss."

As chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust and co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls, I have seen so many examples of how the healthcare system fails Black women.

Maternal mortality is a complex crisis with inequities stemming from many factors, including access to care,

standardization of care, bias, and racism. Pregnancy and birth should be one of the happiest times for a family, but for Black women that is too often not the case, and we must take action now to begin saving the lives and protecting the health of Black women.

One of the most pressing issues related to the maternal mortality crisis we must address is access to high-quality, affordable healthcare. We know there are major risks associated with becoming uninsured shortly after pregnancy.

□ 1115

That is why I fought to have extended Medicare coverage included in the American Rescue Plan, so that women are able to receive postpartum care up to 1 year after birth instead of the existing 60 days of coverage.

But we need to take additional steps to incentivize every single State to permanently implement this policy. That is why, today, I am introducing the Helping Medicaid Offer Maternity Services Act, or Helping MOMS Act of 2021.

This bipartisan legislation will amend the American Rescue Plan to provide a permanent State option to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days after delivery to a full year. The Helping MOMS Act would also authorize a 5 percent Federal medical assistance percentage rate for the first year that States adopt extended coverage.

Ensuring healthcare coverage for the entirety of the postpartum period will save lives and prevent needless complications that endanger the health of mothers and their babies. This is an important step forward, but is not the only change that is needed.

The Black maternal health crisis is a multifactorial epidemic, and solving it will require a multifaceted approach. That is why, tomorrow, I will reintroduce my Mothers and Offspring Mortality and Morbidity Awareness Act, or the MOMMA Act.

This comprehensive bill tackles a growing maternal mortality crisis and severe morbidity in five ways. The MOMMA Act will standardize maternal mortality and morbidity data collection across States and authorize a designated Federal agency to aggregate that data.

Maternal health advocates agree that standardization of data across the country is critical in fully understanding this crisis and informing future decisions about how to improve women's healthcare.

This bill will empower the CDC to provide technical guidance and publish best practices to prevent maternal mortality and morbidity. It will authorize evidence-based national obstetric emergency protocol to save mothers' lives.

The MOMMA Act will expand healthcare coverage through the full postpartum year after giving birth.

Finally, the MOMMA Act will ensure improved access to culturally com-

petent care training and workforce practices throughout the entire delivery continuum.

This aspect, in particular, is so important in addressing the harmful biases and misconceptions that are, unfortunately, pervasive through our healthcare system, but especially rampant when it comes to Black maternal health. We have already lost too many mothers to this crisis.

While many of us celebrated Mother's Day just a few weeks ago, families across the country mourned lost mothers and babies and remembered traumatic and unacceptable birth stories.

I have talked with husbands who are so frustrated with the way their wives were treated, and wonder if there is something else they could have done to protect them. I have heard the heart-breaking stories of tragedy and loss directly from these fathers. I have cried with them and shared their pain.

I introduce these bills, the Helping MOMS Act and the MOMMA Act, in honor of those mothers and families, and recommit myself to always fighting for the health and safety of women.

WORKING TO HELP LOUISIANA STAND BACK UP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, it has been 9 months since Hurricanes Laura and Delta devastated southwest Louisiana.

Our region has endured natural disaster after natural disaster. This past year has been incredibly challenging: two very powerful, major hurricanes; a crippling ice storm; and this week, ongoing, a severe rainfall event that is causing homes and businesses to flood.

Many families will have to again restart the difficult process of rebuilding their lives. Our people have been resilient in the face of great adversity, a show of incredible strength.

But the need for help from the Federal Government is dire. While much work has been done, southwest Louisiana has long-term recovery needs. To date, we have worked with our Federal partners to deliver well over \$1 billion in disaster relief to Louisiana, with more on the way.

We have worked with President Trump and President Biden to secure increased Federal assistance through cost-share adjustments, now at levels of 90 and 100 percent.

These resources have supported southwest Louisiana's most immediate needs: housing and rental assistance, utility repairs, debris removal, hazard mitigation, and other disaster response costs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related bills, these Federal disaster accounts have received supplemental funding well beyond normal appropriations and are still available to the people of southwest Louisiana.

However, our region requires additional support in the form of long-term

recovery resources, primarily through community block grant funding.

Louisiana's Governor issued a formal request to the Biden administration in January of this year. My office has supported our Governor's request in every way through every channel. We worked for months to build support in Congress for long-term recovery resources, and our efforts to build that coalition has been successful.

While that support exists broadly, the Biden administration must first respond to our Governor's official request for supplemental disaster funding. President Biden must formally request specific supplemental disaster relief from Congress. Only then can our brotherhood of support take action here in the House of Representatives. That is the way it works. We have communicated these extreme needs directly to the Biden administration and House leadership.

Additionally, the State must do more to ensure private insurance companies are treating Louisiana citizens fairly. This has been a significant issue that has frustrated Louisiana citizens and hindered our recovery efforts.

I will not stop fighting for the citizens of south Louisiana, and I ask that my colleagues here in this body stand with us. I ask that our President stand with the people of Louisiana. We are one Nation. As a Republic of sovereign States, we have never failed to come to each other's rescue in the wake of natural disaster. Now is one of those moments.

This is a time when Americans must stand together as one. Every day, we are working to help Louisiana stand back up.

VIRGIN ISLANDS ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, the Virgin Islands of the United States sits at the most southern, most easterly point of the United States. Because of this geographic position and its proximity to South America and its almost sentry lighthouse position to the rest of the Caribbean, it has been fought over; exploited by many nations; owned by seven; and used as a base by pirates, privateers, rum and drug runners, and even great corporations.

Despite so much potential, the benefits of our location, climate, our deep ports—one of the deepest in the Caribbean, our fertile soil—the people of the Virgin Islands have not received equitable return on investment and have instead been the spoils of others.

Our people continue to work to create economic benefits for our homes, jobs, skills, revenue, financial independence. Our journey in oil refining is one such chapter in that search.

In the 1960s, the Virgin Islands began refining oil. Our island of St. Croix be-

came the second-largest petroleum refinery in America. In 2012, the refinery closed, exacerbating the shocks of the Great Recession, leading to unemployment rates of 18 percent. Our government made the decision to work to bring the refinery back and, after several years, the terminal and refinery reopened.

In the last few weeks, my office has been in contact with the EPA regarding air emissions incidents, odors, and emissions around the vicinity of the refinery, which threaten the health of residents and our environment.

On May 14, the EPA ordered Limetree Bay, the owners of the terminal and refinery, to pause all operations on the St. Croix refinery due to multiple improperly conducted operations that present an imminent risk to public health. Limetree Bay is in a community that is disproportionately affected by environmental burdens, and recent incidents have raised significant environmental justice concerns.

My office has continued to discuss with the EPA regarding the shutdown of the refinery, which, when fully operational, contributes tremendously to the Virgin Islands' economy. I have also been in contact with the owners of the refinery, as well as the Virgin Islands local government, and I will share with you all, with this Congress, what we can do to rectify the issue.

But part of my concern and one of the reasons I came to Congress was to create mechanisms and funding, incentives so that communities like the Virgin Islands, places long-neglected, can have the tools, funding, incentives, stable schools, healthcare, to create diverse sustainable industry.

As I have said in the past, and continue to reiterate, the current problems in my community further demonstrate the need for so many communities like it to have a diversified economy. This would provide flexibility. A diversified economy creates an economic health in a community, not tied to a single industry or market sector. It also creates and supports innovation.

Not only do companies support one another financially, but they engender an ecosystem of new ideas and product generation. I recognize that funding from the American Rescue Plan should not only be used by the Virgin Island's government to undergird our most vulnerable citizens, our children, mentally ill, our seniors; it should be used to support creation of clean resilient jobs.

I and other Democrats recognize that we must rebuild our communities and our economy better than before through the American Jobs Plan. Now is the time to think boldly with a once-in-a-century investment to create millions of good-paying jobs to ensure America can outcompete any other country in the world.

The President has promised to deliver clean drinking water, a renewed electric grid, high-speed broadband; build, preserve, retrofit more than 2

million homes and commercial buildings; modernize our Nation's schools and childcare facilities; upgrade veterans' hospitals and Federal buildings.

The President's plan includes \$20 billion for new programs that will reconnect neighborhoods like the Virgin Islands, cut off by historic investments, and ensure new projects increase opportunity, advance racial equity and environmental justice, promote affordable access, safeguard critical infrastructure and services, and defend vulnerable communities.

President Biden will call upon Congress, our body, to ensure that new jobs create clean energy, and manufacturing and infrastructure are open and accessible to women and people of color. The House is working on this. We have a historic package to build back better, creating jobs and justice.

MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to thank our men and women in uniform and remember those who gave their life for this country.

The month of May is recognized as Military Appreciation Month, and we have several days dedicated to honoring our servicemen and -women, as well as their families.

May 7 is Military Spouse Appreciation Day. May 8 is Victory in Europe Day, marking the end of World War II in Europe. May 15 is Armed Services Day, where we thank Active Duty members from all branches of the military.

□ 1130

But on the last day of May, we have our most solemn occasion, Memorial Day, where we mourn those whom we lost in defense of this Nation.

The tradition of Memorial Day dates back to 1864 in Boalsburg, Pennsylvania. Three ladies decorated the graves of fallen Civil War soldiers, and the custom has continued every year since then. Boalsburg still puts on a traditional Memorial Day celebration, complete with a parade, a community walk to the cemetery, speeches, military reenactments, and much more.

In the days leading up to Memorial Day, many place flags or lay wreaths at the graves of our soldiers. We gather with friends and family to attend parades and special services to remember those lost.

As we take the time to thank our Active Duty members and remember the fallen, we must also never forget the soldiers who have not returned home.

As the father of a wounded warrior, I thank God every day he returned home safely. Not every family has been as lucky, and we owe our greatest efforts to recovering the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.